DTH

492. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is not a fact that in view of non-control over DTH on pricing of channels as has been done in case of CAS, the existing DTH service providers are charging exorbitant prices on pay channels to the detriment of the customers;

(b) if so, whether his Ministry has taken this issue before TRAI to rein in existing broadcasters from DTH companies; and

(c) if so, the outcome of such an initiative?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has informed that a comparison of entry level package prices of a few DTH operators with the CAS offering brings out the fact that pricing of DTH channels does not appear to be exorbitant. For example DISH TV, a DTH operator has one entry level package (Silver Pack) starting at Rs.99 + taxes containing 110 channels and services [both Pay and Free to Air (FTA) channels]. At the highest level of subscriber packages, the same DTH operator charges Rs. 275/- + taxes for platinum Pack containing 165 channels and services (both pay and FTA channels, As against this, another DTH operator *i.e.* Tata Sky has a Base Package (Super Hit Pack) of Rs. 125/- including taxes containing 60 channels (both Pay and FTA). At the highest level of subscriber packages, the same DTH operator charges Rs. 275/- inclusive of taxes for Super Saver Pack containing 123 channels (both Pay and FTA channels). Compared to these package prices, a subscriber under the CAS regime has to pay a minimum of Rs.82/- excluding taxes and Rs. 5.35 for each Pay channel that subscriber wants to subscribe to. In view of the above, the price offering in case of DTH services *vis-a-vis* CAS is not at a wide variance.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Need for censoring of television content

†493. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the purpose behind getting certificate/permission from the Censor Board for public screening of films;

(b) the difference between the public screening of films and broadcasting by television channels;

(c) if not, the reasons for not obtaining permission/certificate from the Censor Board for the advertisement, serials broadcast by television channels; and

(d) whether Government is going to develop any kind of system in this regard with the details thereof?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATES IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) The purpose of sanctioning of films for public exhibition is to protect the viewing public from possible unhealthy influence of uncertified films.

(b) Whereas public exhibition of films is governed by the Cinematograph Act, 1952, television programme/broadcast is regulated under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and the terms of permission granted to the channel under the Uplinking/Downlinking Guidelines issued by the Central Government.

(c) and (d) There is no provision for pre-censorship of programmes telecast by private TV channels. However, all the private TV channels are required to adhere to the Programme and Advertising Code prescribed under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and rules framed thereunder. Whereas certification of films by Central Board of Film Certification is as per the Cinematograph Act, 1952 and the Rules and Guidelines framed thereunder. At present there is no move for pre-censorship of TV serials, etc.

Foreign magazines

494. SHRI P.R. RAJAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has allowed printing, publishing and circulation of foreign magazines in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government allowed the publication of Indian edition of foreign scientific/technical/speciality magazines/journals/periodicals in the year 2002 and recently in the year 2008, the Government also allowed publication of Indian editions of foreign news magazines dealing with news and current affairs by Indian entity (ies), subject to certain conditions.

The detailed guidelines in this regard are available on the website of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (*www.mib.nic.in*). Till date, permission has been given for publication of 209 Indian editions of foreign scientific/technical/speciality magazines/journals. The list is available on the website of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (*www.mib.nic.in*).

Applications for private TV Channels

495. DR. V. MAITREYAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER of be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of applications pending in his Department for permission to operate private TV Channels, State-wise;

(b) the time frame for clearance of such applications by his Ministry;

(c) whether it is also a fact that there is an inordinate delay in disposal of these applications; and

(d) the steps that are being taken to streamline the process of giving clearances to the pending applications in the minimum stipulated time frame?